

Monthly newsletter of PTC. Affiliate of Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ Inc.

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## March 2012

<b>President</b>	Leo Manders	356 1731	Dorota Giejsztowt	352 9130
<b>Vice-President</b>	Kevin Hughes	332 6281	Raymond Ford	351 9496
<b>Vice-President</b>	Mary Hines	942 6486	Dan Pryce	356 2617
<b>Treasurer</b>	Geoff Price	337 2614	Brian Smith	Quartermaster 355 9945
<b>Trip Planner</b>	Gary Huish	332 7020		
<b>Secretary</b>	Merv Meredith	322 7239		
<b>Editor</b>	Kerry Moore	359 5069		

**New Member Enquiries** Please contact Stan Wilder, 980 5291, to request an info-pack. You will also receive three complimentary newsletters

**CORRESPONDENCE**, including changes of address etc. can be sent to the club secretary—see above

**OUR CLUB** consists of people of all ages who tramp for recreation. Regular trips are organised, ranging from 'easy' to 'hard', day trips to long weekends. Various instruction courses run each year to improve members' skills for back-country tramping. In addition to a monthly club meeting, a variety of social events are held.

**CLUB NIGHTS** are held on the **second Tuesday** of each month at the Canterbury Horticultural Centre, South Hagley Park (entrance on Riccarton Ave), starting promptly at 7.45 pm. Doors open 7.30.

**Tue 13 Mar** **AGM followed by DRYING FOOD FOR TRAMPING**  
**Geoff and Mary Korver** will share their expertise in dehydrating food  
**Supper Duty:** Guy Mulligan, Paul Moreham, John Mouat

**Tue 10 Apr** **MT KAILASH—THE SACRED MOUNTAIN KORA TREK**  
**Brian Smith** will take us around this 6714m landmark of inspirational beauty on the Tibetan Plateau. He will include the acclimatization trek up the Karnali Valley, Nepal and the journey across Tibet via Rongbuk to Lhasa  
**Supper Duty:** Graeme Paltridge, Rachael Payne, Stuart Payne

## AGM AGM AGM AGM AGM —7:30pm Tue 13 March

The 80th Annual General Meeting of Peninsula Tramping Club will be held at Canterbury Horticultural Centre, Hagley Avenue

**Agenda:** Presentation of Exec. Reports  
Election of officers, executive members and auditor

**General Business:** Nominations for all positions are called for. They may be sent, signed by nominee, proposer and seconder, to **Merv Meredith, Secretary, 322 7239**

## COMING TRIPS

### Day Trips:

Depart from and return to a convenient point on the side of town nearest to the destination. Non-members are asked to phone the trip leader in advance. If you doubt your suitability for a day-trip, or if the weather is turning bad, contact the trip leader beforehand. A phone inquiry does not oblige you to go on the trip.


### Weekend Trips:

May leave on a Friday night (usually for base camps) or Saturday morning. Please book with the trip leader by the closing date. Be certain you want to go on the trip when booking, as it is not fair on the leader to withdraw after the closing date (good excuses excepted). Numbers on some weekend trips are limited, so book promptly.

### Bike Trips:

For up-to-date details of any biking trips highlighted below please contact

**Rick Bolch ph 980 5156 email [rlbolch@paradise.net.nz](mailto:rlbolch@paradise.net.nz) unless otherwise stated.**

<b>10 Mar</b> <b>Saturday</b> ■	<b>MT MISERY</b> <b>Gary Huish 332 7020</b> <b>Moderate</b> tramp over 1765m Mt Misery at the end of the Black Range above Cass. Don't be put off by the name. Great panoramic views from the top including Mt Horrible. <b>Start: 8am Church Cnr (across from church)</b>	<b>Maps BV20;K34</b>  <b>Approx Cost: \$19</b>
<b>17-24 Mar</b> <b>Sat-Sat</b> ■■■■■■■	<b>WHANGANUI RIVER TRIP</b> <b>Mary Hines 942 6486</b> Classic kayaking and walking trip down the Whanganui River. <b>Trip Closed</b>	
<b>17-18 Mar</b> <b>Sat-Sun</b> ■■	<b>ZAMPA TOPS</b> <b>Dan Pryce 356 2617</b> This <b>moderate</b> trip traverses the tops to the east of Cannibal Gorge and gives spectacular views of the Spencer Mountains. <b>List Closes: Sat 11 March</b>	<b>Maps BT23;M31</b>
<b>18 Mar</b> <b>Sun</b> ■	<b>CAVE STREAM, FLOCK HILL</b> <b>Kerry Moore 359 5069</b> <b>Easy-moderate</b> walk following Cave Stream as it flows 360m underground and emerges into Broken River. Be prepared for wet and cold conditions. Take a reliable torch, and a dry set of clothing to change into later. There will be time for extra walking to Castle Hill Rocks or Flock Hill. <b>Start: 8am Church Cnr (across from church)</b>	<b>Maps BW21;K34</b>  <b>Approx Cost: \$15</b>
<b>18 Mar</b> <b>Sun</b> 	<b>LEES VALLEY—TOWNSEND STREAM</b> <b>Rick Bolch 980 5156</b> Through the Lees Valley gorge ( near Oxford ) with the option of going to the old Townshend hut site. Returning the same way. An <b>easy-moderate</b> day trip. <b>Meet 9 am at Robbies on Cranford Street.</b>	

25 Mar Sun ■	<b>MT BARROSA</b> <b>Dan Pryce 356 2617</b> A <b>moderate</b> trip in the Clent Hills area above Ashburton Gorge Road. Open tussock country with good views all the way up this 800m climb to a 1364m peak. <b>Start: 8am Church Cnr (across from church)</b>	<b>Maps BX19;J36</b>  <b>Approx Cost: \$20</b>
31 -1 Apr Sat-Sun ■ ■	<b>LEWIS TOPS</b> <b>Kevin Hughes 332 6281</b> An <b>easy-moderate</b> Lewis Pass tops trip along the main divide starting from the Lewis Pass car park. Camping on the top for views up the Maruia River to the Spencer Mountains and across to the Freyberg Range. <b>List Closes: Sat 24 March</b>	<b>Maps BT23;M31</b>
1 Apr Sun ■	<b>MONSERRAT</b> <b>Bruce Cameron 338 4014</b> <b>Easy-moderate</b> walk in farm country to 457m hill overlooking North Canterbury coastline up to Motunau Island <b>Start: 8am Robbies near Placemakers (Cranford St)</b>	<b>Maps BV25;N34</b>  <b>Approx Cost: \$18</b>
6-9 Apr Fri-Mon ■ ■ ■ ■ Easter	<b>HELLFIRE STREAM-MISERY STREAM-LEES CREEK</b> <b>Merv Meredith 322 7239</b> This <b>moderate-hard</b> tramp is a spectacular round-trip, crossing two 1900m high passes on the Raglan Range into seldom-visited valleys. Don't let the names put you off. <b>List Closes: Sat 17 March</b>	<b>Maps BS25;N29,30</b>
6-9 Apr Fri-Mon ■ ■ ■ ■ Easter	<b>THOUSAND ACRE PLATEAU (VIA MATIRI R.)</b> <b>Kevin Hughes 332 6281</b> <b>Moderate</b> trip to this classic limestone area that looks impregnable from afar but the initial climb leads to the almost horizontal tablelands. Great views to the Hundred Acre Plateau, Mt Misery, The Needle and the Haystack. <b>List Closes: Sat 17 March</b>	<b>Maps BR23;M28,M29</b>
6-9 Apr Fri-Mon ■ ■ ■ ■ Easter	<b>HEAPHY TRACK</b> <b>Leo Manders 356 1731</b> Classic <b>Great Walk</b> in Kahurangi National Park with a great variety of terrain—beach, forest and downland. The geology and flora are distinctly unlike Canterbury's. . <b>List Closes: Sat 17 March</b>	<b>Maps BP22,23;L26,L27,M26</b>
6-9 Apr Fri-Mon ■ ■ ■ ■ Easter	<b>NELSON BASE CAMP</b> <b>Mary &amp; Geoff Korver 355 3905</b> The plan is to stay at a motor camp in Nelson and run day trips, with the option of some overnight tramps. Possibilities are Dun Mountain, Maungatapu Track, Mt Arthur Tablelands, and a range of shorter walks—something good for all levels of fitness. <b>List Closes: Sat 17 March</b>	<b>Maps BQ25,26;O27</b>
8 Apr Sun ■	<b>MT ISOBEL</b> <b>TBA Contact Gary Huish 332 7020 if you would like to lead this trip</b> This <b>easy-moderate</b> trip traverses from Jacks Pass Road towards the Dog Stream waterfall before climbing steeply then travelling along the ridge to Mt Isobel. May be time for a soak in the hot pools. <b>Start: 8am Robbies near Placemakers (Cranford St)</b>	<b>Maps BU24,25;N32</b>  <b>Approx Cost: \$13</b>
14-15 Apr Sat-Sun ■ ■	<b>CASS SADDLE/LAGOON SADDLE</b> <b>Mary &amp; Geoff Korver 355 3905</b> Popular <b>moderate</b> round trip in the Craigieburns, overnighing in the good sized Hamilton Hut. Mainly good track through beech forest, two tussock saddles, grassy flats, with a few river crossings thrown in. <b>List Closes: Sat 31 March</b>	<b>Maps BV20,21;K34</b>

<b>15 Apr Sun</b> ■	<b>MT TORLESSE</b> <b>Gary Huish 332 7020</b> Popular <b>moderate-hard</b> snow trip to this near 2000m peak on the Torlesse Range. Walking up the Kowai River to the hut before the serious climbing begins. Though not tricky it is still a 1100m ascent from the hut. Ice axe and possibly crampons required. <b>Start: 8am Church Cnr (across from church)</b>	<b>Maps BW21;L34,35</b>  <b>Approx Cost: \$13</b>
<b>21-22 Apr Sat-Sun</b> ■■	<b>WALKER PASS - TARN COL - EDWARDS</b> <b>Liz Stephenson 358 3281</b> One of the classic Arthur's Pass NP tramps. This <b>moderate</b> trip takes in the Hawdon and Edwards valleys, a couple of attractive alpine passes, an attractive alpine campsite and views of what's left of Falling Mountain. <b>List Closes: Sat 14 April</b>	<b>Maps BV20,21;K33</b>
<b>21-22 Apr Sat-Sun</b> ■■	<b>PINNACLE</b> <b>Kerry Moore 359 5069</b> <b>Moderate-hard</b> trip in Victoria Forest Park, involving some bush-bashing, rock scrambling and ridge travel. Camping out in one of the numerous alpine tarn basins along the way. <b>List Closes: Sat 14 April</b>	<b>Maps BT22;L31</b>
<b>22 Apr Sun</b> ■	<b>LEITH HILL</b> <b>Keith McQuillan 384 6164</b> <b>Easy-moderate</b> trip to the 1384m peak behind Castle Hill Village. Possibility of round-trip behind the Castle Hill scenic reserve. <b>Start: 8am Church Cnr (across from church)</b>	<b>Maps BW21;K34,35</b>  <b>Approx Cost: \$15</b>
<b>26-29 Apr Thu-Sun</b> ■■■■	<b>KEPLER TRACK</b> <b>Leo Manders 356 1731</b> The <b>moderate</b> Kepler Track is an alpine adventure with stunning panoramas. It takes you from the shore of Lake Te Anau to spend a night high above the clouds at Luxmore Hut (1085m). You will traverse the ridgelines of the Kepler Mountains, dropping down to beautiful Lake Manapouri, before heading back through peaceful beech forest. <b>List Closes: Sat 14 April</b>	<b>Maps CD07,08;C43</b>
<b>29 Apr Sun</b> ■	<b>OKUKU HILL</b> <b>Keith McQuillan 384 6164</b> <b>Easy-moderate</b> tramp to this 1143m foothill, approached from the Lees Valley Road. Mixture of farm tracks and possibly tussock and scrub. Will probably walk around Pigeon Bush and part of Retreat Stream catchment. <b>Start: 8am Robbies near Placemakers (Cranford St)</b>	<b>Maps BV23;M34</b>  <b>Approx Cost: \$13</b>
<b>2-6 May Wed-Sun</b> ■■■■■	<b>ROUTE BURN - CAPLES</b> <b>Gary Huish 332 7020</b> <b>Moderate.</b> One of New Zealand's world famous walking tracks and timed after the main season so normal hut fees apply. May start on 5 May through to 9 May depending on weather. <b>List Closes: Sat 21 April</b>	<b>Maps CB09,10;D40,E40</b>
<b>5-6 May Sat-Sun</b> ■■	<b>HOKITIKA BASE CAMP</b> <b>Leo Manders 356 1731</b> We'll be staying at the Holiday Park and doing some of the day walks (all grades) in the area. <b>List Closes: Sat 21 April</b>	<b>Maps BU19,BV19;H35</b>
<b>6 May Sun</b> ■	<b>MT WINTERSLOW</b> <b>TBA Contact Gary Huish 332 7020 if you would like to lead this trip</b> <b>Moderate</b> walk to the highest peak (1700m) on the Winterslow Range. Starting from Sharplin Falls car park, with potential views of Mts Cook and Tasman. Take ice axes and crampons. <b>Start: 7am Church Cnr (across from church)</b>	<b>Maps BX20;K36</b>  <b>Approx Cost: \$16</b>

**12-15 May MOTATAPU TRACK**

**Maps CB11,12;F40,41**

**Sat-Tue Dan Pryce 356 2617 & Gary Huish 332 7020**

■■■■ Moderate tramp of Shania Twain fame between Arrowtown and Wanaka.

**List Closes: Sat 28 April**

## **President's Report**

### **AGM**

The 80th PTC AGM will be held starting at 7.30pm Tues 13 March 2012. Please attend this meeting. This is your opportunity to find out where your club is heading and your opportunity to have input into that direction. Your executive has worked hard over the last several months on many background subjects to be able to provide you as members with a clear direction as to where we go from here. Remember that while the executive makes most decisions on your behalf, the AGM is a good opportunity to have your say. Decisions made at an AGM override that of the executive. This is where your executive is accountable to you.

### **Club Night Venue**

We have discussed the consequences of our 50% venue hire increase and have looked at options on alternatives. Thank you to those club members who provided feedback, this was valuable in helping your executive make a good decision. We examined moving to a site at Wigram and although the venue hire rates would be considerably less, the executive have agreed to stay with our present venue. This was because the Wigram site would require longer travelling times for most members, the site is not central and could result in a lower club night attendance.

### **Club Night Supper Charges**

Starting on 13 March's club night the donation system for supper and hall hire costs has been scrapped. in favour of a firm minimum supper charge of \$2.00 per person attending. Even this amount will mean we incur a small loss, assuming current attendance figures. We need to increase club night attendances.

Average donation per person lately has been: Oct \$1.10, Nov \$1.10, Dec \$1.90, Feb \$1.60. I asked at Nov's club night for people to contribute \$2.00 and in Dec most did but we dropped back in Feb. We need \$2 pp to cover costs. It would be a pity if we had to raise subs again.

### **FMC and PTC Compliance**

This year the basis of how your FMC levy is paid to FMC has changed. This is a culmination of many years of FMC struggling to deliver the work they do on the amount they received. For a while they looked at increasing the FMC levy. Now FMC have new guidelines for clubs starting this year in April. Affiliated clubs can now elect whether they want to be a full declaration club and thereby pay a \$10 per member levy or they can elect to be a partial declaration club and pay \$12 per member declared. Obviously this determines the number of FMC cards a club will receive. Our club has always been a strong supporter of FMC and together with most other traditional member clubs is opting for full declaration. The \$12 option would require us to raise your subscriptions as nearly everyone wants an FMC card. This now means we as a club need to declare our full membership and thereby pay the \$10 per member rate. With our individual and family memberships we've had difficulty applying FMC guidelines as to what constitutes a member. This is no problem as long as the subscription rates are no different for each of these members, if they are to be classed as one member for FMC purposes. We provisionally attempted this last year by having the same rate for each membership and having an additional family surcharge for family memberships. Your executive then looked at what we would need to change in our constitution to bring us into line with the FMC requirements. On working through this, it was discovered any change we made to family memberships would undermine family member rights currently available in our present constitution for partner members, child family members etc which in a legal sense could mean they are not really members if it came to such things as voting rights, liability with regard to new Health and Safety regulations, denial of claim on our public liability insurance etc. We could have gone further and spent money on obtaining legal advice. In the end we wanted to protect all our members rights as they currently stand, yet also come into line with the new FMC guidelines. That then leaves two options:

- 1) we could increase all family memberships by at least another \$5.00 to \$10 extra over and above individual membership and classify all our family memberships as 2 members for FMC purposes and each family membership would get 2 cards automatically. The reality with our club is that there are only 3 to 4 family memberships who want more than one card.
- 2) Have both individual and family memberships at the same rate with all memberships receiving one FMC card. This necessitates the removal of the current family surcharge which generates around \$215.00 of income for the

club. Those family memberships who then want extra cards would request them and pay an extra \$10 per card and we would define these people as extra members for FMC purposes. Retaining the family surcharge could legally mean we are charging families more than individual members and because of this our club could be liable to declare all of these families as extra members. The amount we charge our members is of no consequence to FMC. As a result we have decided to not recommend a change to the constitution thereby protecting all our members' rights but to recommend that we remove the family surcharge at the next subscription special general meeting which we will call before Dec 2012 when subscription renewals are posted out.

### **New Membership**

I reported on my thoughts on new members and what we have done to date in Feb 2012 Footnotes. If you have now read down from above and also my AGM President's Report included with this Footnotes you will understand that we are coming under increasing financial pressure. A good part of this is due to member resignations not being replaced with new members. Understandably we have been in difficult times over the last 18 months so the problem has grown. The reality is if we could have 6 additional new active members who came to most club nights and tramped with our club say 8 to 10 times a year, then these 6 people would make a big difference to things like club revenue, support for club night functions and more importantly whether a trip runs or not. As for trips we have been approaching that critical mass of too low an active member turnout. If this deteriorates further then this will have an impact on future tramping trips, club night functions etc. all of which leads to fewer choices for members. PTC is blessed with a dedicated membership who do usually participate. We generally do have good attendances. We need some more active members. Equally we need you to recommend a friend or two to become active members. We need new members to replace those we lose. Even a net 6 new members over the next year would make a big difference to the future of your club and all of you as members will benefit by increased choices and lower costs. I strongly encourage you to help on our new membership drive this coming year. To make it easier your incoming executive will gain a Membership Officer who will take charge of what we all need to do to encourage new members. Thank you for the encouraging feedback on this issue which I brought up last month. I have received a lot of good ideas on measures we can take. I would like some more feedback on what you think we need to do to attract new members, what contacts you may have and any ideas of other benefits we can provide to club members. Please come to our AGM armed with these ideas or email or phone me.

### **Trip Planning Meeting**

As reported in last month's Footnotes. I forgot to tell you the date which is Tue 17 April 2012 starting at 7.00pm at Gary Huish's, 5 Patchett Place off Hackthorne Road, Cashmere. This is your chance to choose your trips for the 12 months starting 1 July 2012. If you can't attend the meeting, email your trip ideas to [gary.huish@xtra.co.nz](mailto:gary.huish@xtra.co.nz)

### **Emergency Contact and Medical Information Sheet**

Increasingly clubs are requiring their members to have available their emergency contact details, medication requirements, allergies in event of an emergency where you may become unconscious. Your executive has decided that PTC will also now follow these guidelines. When the next FMC bulletin is posted out, probably in April, included with that will be an A5 coloured piece of paper showing your name and other details on it as supplied on our club's database. There will be lots of other blanks for you to fill in like your emergency contact people's details, medications you are on, allergies etc. When you receive this please fill it out completely with a standard ball-point (water-insoluble) ink. If "nil" applies write this rather than leave blank. Fold the paper and put it inside a small plastic bag and put this inside your personal first aid kit. The model form we are using is similar to that used by Pegasus. If you are a member of Pegasus or another club and have already done this, then only one form is needed. The important thing is that all members will now need to have this form completed in their personal first-aid kits for all future tramping trips, starting a month after we have mailed the form to you. Every member needs their own personal form in their own personal first aid kit. Trip leaders can ask you to make sure the form is in your first aid kit with you and will be able to exclude you from a trip if you don't have it. More and more emergency services need all the facts when dealing with an emergency and this can mean life or death during critical life-saving moments.

### **Visitor Intentions System Changes**

I reported in Dec/Jan 2012 Footnotes on changes to the Visitor Intentions System. Simply you will not be able to provide your intentions at a DoC centre anymore. All intentions now need to be made personally by you for all trips you intend to do whether club or private. You have a number of choices, you can use your own contact person, you can use our club's PLB contact trio as your contacts – check Dec / Jan 2012 Footnotes for details on



how to do this or you can go online through the Mountain Safety Council website and do this electronically. [www.mountainsafety.org.nz](http://www.mountainsafety.org.nz).

It is also a good idea to load the names, phone numbers, email addresses of the PLB contact trio into your mobile phone—very useful in an emergency. See the Dec/Jan 2012 Footnotes for this information.

**Happy Tramping – Leo Manders**

## SOCIAL EVENTS

### Thur 29 Mar **Evening walk at The Groynes and meal at Styx & Stone, Northwood**

Meet at The Groynes at 6.30pm for an hour's walk. Go to Groynes Drive, off John's Road, turn left at Ranger's building and park in first parking area you come to—on the right near the bridge.



Followed by meal at **Styx and Stone Stonegrill Restaurant**, corner Main North Road and Radcliffe Road, Northwood (approx 7.45pm).

For menus see [www.styxandstone.co.nz](http://www.styxandstone.co.nz)

Names for meal to Mary Hines [hinestandm@clear.net.nz](mailto:hinestandm@clear.net.nz) by **Sunday 25th March** please  
Also let Mary know if you are interested in car pooling from south Christchurch

### Wed 6 June

**7.30pm**



### ***Much Ado About Nothing – by William Shakespeare***

*Directed by Ross Gumbley*

*Featuring Lisa Chappell*

*Laced with Shakespearean wit, Much Ado About Nothing is the model for the modern romantic comedy. Beatrice and Benedick are engaged in a war of words; scorning love, marriage and each other. But with so many sparks flying, hearts are soon set alight.*

We have booked the best seats in the new Court Theatre, Bernard Street, Addington.

Book your seat, \$39 discount price by **Tuesday 15th May**, with Brian Smith

Ph 355 9945, 027 740 3035, or [brian21x@xtra.co.nz](mailto:brian21x@xtra.co.nz)

## NOTICES

**Membership** We welcome new member **Annette Richards**  
**Liz Cunningham** is rejoining

**Deadline for April newsletter** **Sun 1 April**. Trip reports, news and items of interest may be e-mailed to **Kerry Moore**, [moorekj@xtra.co.nz](mailto:moorekj@xtra.co.nz) phone **359 5069**

**Next committee meeting** **7:30pm Tue 27 Mar at Kevin's**

## TRIP REPORTS

### **REES - DART TRACK—27-31 December 2011**

The original destination for this post-xmas trip was Lake Chalice but after previous experiences in the Pelorus River and an adverse forecast we headed for the Rees-Dart track for a drier forecast.

After driving down on the 27<sup>th</sup> December, we met at Glenorchy and car shuffled between the Rees and Paradise road ends leaving Dan's vehicle at the Chinaman's Bluff car park. Six of us fitted in Tim and Mary's vehicle to begin our tramp at the Muddy Creek end of the track. Due to time constraints we only walked for an hour and found an excellent flat camp spot on a terrace amongst the trees with a soft beech-leaf base.

The 28<sup>th</sup> dawned fine and clear and we were on our way by 7.30am. We followed the poled track across several boggy patches and grassy flats past the track to Kea Basin and Mount Earnslaw/Pikirakatahi on the other side of the river before reaching the swing-bridge at the national park boundary. On entering the park the marked track went through beech forest past Clarke Slip to the bush edge, then crossed the swing-bridge to the river's east

bank and the spacious Shelter Rock Hut where we stopped for lunch.

The track wandered along the rocky bed of the Rees on the true left and then began a steady, gradual climb towards the head of the valley where the final steep climb up a scree slope, close to the bluff, led to the Rees Saddle. Upon reaching the 1471m saddle we had stopped to admire the extensive view when we were entertained by a falcon putting on a display of aerial acrobatics in its attempt to capture a couple of small birds. The display lasted less than a minute but was a fantastic sight at this magic spot on our journey.



After an initial steep decent, the track beside Snowy Creek gradually lessens until it reaches the bridge crossing the Upper Snowy Creek. Once over the bridge the track sidles across broken slopes before another section of steep downhill. The track levels out again and we reached the 32 bed Dart Hut at approximately 5pm after crossing the Snowy Creek swing-bridge.

The weather for the 29<sup>th</sup> was a bit patchy with a mix of sun, mist and showers as we set off at 9am for the 20km return journey to Cascade Saddle. The track begins close to the camping area through a grove of beech and crosses a terrace until reaching the Dart River where we followed poles and cairns up the valley. About half-way along, the track climbs gradually to be on top of the moraine wall with a view of the Dart Glacier becoming ever clearer. We then reached a point where we had to commence the much steeper climb up moraine and tussock slopes towards Cascade Saddle.

It started to drizzle and we stopped about 1.30pm for lunch in the shelter of some large boulders. After lunch the drizzle disappeared and we continued up, until at last we had reached our objective, the Cascade Saddle and were able to admire the extent of the Dart Glacier, some wonderful waterfalls and the West Matukituki Valley.

The morning of the 30<sup>th</sup> was dismal, grey and drizzly with no view to be had, and with only 18km of relatively



flat track to Daleys Flat Hut, we decided to wait and have an early lunch in anticipation of clearing skies. The cloud eventually lifted and it proved to be a brilliant day as we wound our way down through beech forest to Cattle Flat which is 4km of long, grassy terraces and gullies.

Three members went up the side track to the Rock Bivy and were very impressed by the work that had been done to make this bivy a comfortable retreat for anyone wanting to stay there. The track continued on from there through more beech forest and grassy flats—without the gullies—until Daleys Flat Hut was reached, much to the delight of the voracious sandflies that plague this area. While having a nibble we were gazing out the sliding doors on to the deck—you didn't dare open them for fear of being eaten alive—when it was noticed that a red and white parachute was landing on the flat below the hut.

It wasn't long before a young man arrived at the hut with his parachute all packed up. He had come from Chinamans Bluff, intending to stay the night and climb up to a point the next morning where he could launch himself and continue his journey riding the thermals to who knows where! It certainly was a different way to visit a high country hut and everyone was envious of his ability and nerve to swoop and soar high above and enjoy a bird's-eye view of this spectacular valley.

The last day of our tramp, the 31<sup>st</sup> was clear and hot and we departed at 8am as we wanted to get to Glenorchy early enough for lunch and to continue on our way. From Daleys Flat Hut the track is through beech forest to Dredge Flat, then through forest and across gravel flats to Sandy Bluff. The track then sidles over the bluff and descends to Sandy Flat. After more gravel flats the track follows the river through forest to Chinaman's Bluff. Then it was a case of six people and six packs cramming into Dan's Hyundai to drive back to where Tim and Mary's vehicle was parked at the Muddy Creek end of the track.

We were: **Mary & Tim Hines, Gary Huish, Pauline McFarlane Dan Pryce, and Douglas Woods.** 🏠 PMcF

## **Nina – The Grand Duchess—21-22 Jan 2012**

This trip is often planned as **Nina-Lucretia Stream-Brass Monkey Biv-Grand Duchess-Duchess Stream-Nina** but with rain forecast for the Sunday we decided on a direct approach to the Duchess. This meant a **Nina-Duchess** strategy via a spur that leads up from the site of the old Nina Hut, then a sidle towards Brass Monkey Biv and camping by a big tarn on day 1. Day 2 would be a sidle to find a way down through bluffs to **Duchess Stream**, and on to the **Nina** and out.

Leader Merv had us meeting at 0600 so we were away walking from Palmer Lodge by 9 and at the site of the old hut by noon. The bush section of the spur has an average gradient of 1:3.5 but was open enough except for a few windfalls. At the bushline the gradient improves and the going is easier but for a few bluffy bits. We got to a point just short of the 1703m Duchess where we would sidle towards the big tarns and wondered whether we had enough time to climb higher. Doug sped to the top in 20 minutes with Derek close behind. Merv and Kerry reached the top, took photos but didn't linger as the NWer was brisk. Back at our packs we set off to find a sheltered campsite by a tarn. The first tarn had tent sites but was too exposed so we pressed on to the second where we found a little shelter from the wind but poor tent space. We pitched our Minarets where we could at around 4.30 and had a leisurely time keeping low to minimize the wind. Our kitchen was a dry mini-tarn and out of it came a tasty Moroccan couscous meal flavoured with Merv's secret herbs. With the cool breeze chasing us into the tents well before night-fall we had a long sleep.

The predicted rain arrived during the night so we had a quick breakfast near our kitchen which was now a 40cm deep tarn. We packed the tents from their well-sodden sites and headed north-east looking for a way past an imposing wall of bluffs. The rain was still falling but easing. We descended a promising gully hoping this was the one and we wouldn't have to climb back up and go further up the Duchess valley. There are very few good routes into Duchess Stream but we managed to find a good one, descending into low scrub, then trees and then we were near the stream. Doug's GPS wasn't much help. It was still at home plugged into its charger, so we didn't plot our path but without it Doug competently led the way down on the right bank. With all the rain the stream was a gusher so we were pleased we didn't have to cross it. If you pass this way and find a yellow pack cover, it's Derek's. Towards the end of this leg we had to climb a little and then descend the last bit of the spur we'd started up the day before. By lunch time we were back at the former hut site where we had a lengthy stop.

With everyone in good health we had a brisk walk back on the left-bank track of the Nina and got back to the cars in sunshine but with rain-clouds gathering to the east. We had almost packed the car when it started raining which made us throw the last items in hurriedly and drive east, wipers swishing. We (**Merv Meredith, Derek Gane, Douglas Woods and Kerry Moore**) were back in Chch by 6pm after a snack stop at Culverden. Thanks go to Merv for overseeing a memorable, successful hike. 🏔️ KM

## Croesus-Moonlight 27-28 January 2012

**The Plan:** leave Chch 7.30am Friday, drive to the Smoke-ho car-park and the start of Croesus Track (about 1 km past Blackball on a sealed road to Roa, and then right up a signposted gravel road for about 5km) for an 11am, walk up to Garden Gully and up to stamping battery and NE to a derelict mine marked on the topo map (BT20) From here, head off-track up the valley to a saddle and down into Moonlight Creek's left branch to pick up the Moonlight track at swing bridge, turn left up-track to camp above the bushline near a tarn. Saturday—over tops to Croesus track and down via Ces Clark Hut and back to Smoke-ho car-park betting back to Chch around 6pm Saturday.

Well, the best laid plans...The first part of our trip went to plan in that we got up to Garden Gully for lunchtime, the weather was good and we had a relaxing sunny break by the old 1930s miners' hut. We then headed up towards the derelict mine. Douglas and Tim did the detour to the impressive quartz stamping battery, reckoned to be about 100 yrs old, as they had not seen it before. They quickly caught up with Trevor and me as we had got to the end of the track with no obvious way forward. Dropping into the stream gully and up the other side towards the saddle looked inadvisable and what looked like the collapsed entrance to the mine wasn't where it was marked on the map. After some exploration and discussion, we decided to head uphill NE. It was steep and hard going but with plenty of tree roots and branches to aid us and eventually we got to a particularly thick band of stunted trees where we had to remove our packs to squeeze through but then Douglas found a clearer gully, possibly an animal track, which provided easier going onto the open tops. We continued up to the highest point, 1074m. Time from the stamping battery to this point, 2½ hr. Once there, we could see an obvious spur down towards the Moonlight Valley (this differed from our original plan to head to the saddle and drop down the valley itself as this looked very steep and covered in dense bush. With the aid of GPS, Douglas navigated us down the spur through dense bush at times, clambering downhill over what looked like centuries of fallen trees on trees, on trees and eventually we dropped out onto the track about 10 minutes south of Passini's swingbridge and the site of an old hut, by the bridge, not marked on current maps. This is now just a stone chimney and some other stone walls, possibly an out-building or store and lots of old metal relics of the gold mining days scattered around. Now it was 8pm so it was a welcome campsite for the night! Point 1074 to our camp site took us 3 hr, so the whole off-track part had taken much longer than expected. We quickly set up camp and had chicken curry and couscous followed by fruit cake and custard for dinner, all still in daylight!

We had some rain in the night as had been forecast, but Saturday morning was bright and dry and we had good views with sun on the tops as we sat having our breakfast. We were packed up and off by 8am up the Moonlight towards the bushline. We got up to the site of the derelict Meikles Hut and realised that there was no camping room there at all, so it was just as well we stopped where we had. The old hut also had a DoC "Danger do not enter sign" on it but I suspect that had we got there the previous night, given the lack of available camp sites, I think we would have risked it! We carried on up, crossing several slips, including one major one, up through lovely sub-alpine bush, including mountain nei neis (dracophyllums) to the bushline. Time taken from our camp-site to the bushline, 2½ hr. There was no obvious camping at the bushline either, contrary to the DoC info, but after about 15-20 mins above the bushline we came to a flatter area with water, which would have made a reasonable campsite. We headed up following a good spur but unfortunately the weather had deteriorated by now to intermittent, light rain and a colder wind so we didn't get views, certainly not good enough to spot any tarns, and didn't stop for long.

The route over the tops between the Moonlight and the Croesus tracks was mostly poled, although a couple of times we had to search around for the next pole due to thick cloud, and mostly on the ridge, undulating to the highest point at 1147m. Views from the tops, had we had any, would be of Lake Brunner and Arthurs Pass to the south, the West Coast, and Mounts Cook and Tasman in the distant south, and north-east to the Victoria Range, and the Tasman coastline. Some of us had been lucky enough to have seen it before in good weather. The poled

route then sidled to the south of a 1216m peak and regained the ridge but leaving it soon after and dropping south-west to meet the Croesus track—bushline to Croesus Track Junction 3¼ hr). This good track then kept to the ridges for another hour—and some sections were quite windy—before dropping to Ces Clark Hut, taking 1½ hr from junction to hut). By now it was 3pm and the plan had been to have a quick rest break and head down to the car, but some of us were very tired, wet and cold and the weather was getting worse, so we decided to stay the night at Ces Clark Hut. We were the only ones at the hut, there was a good supply of coal and we each had enough spare food to keep us going for the night. There were two large pieces of firewood but no kindling so Tim set to the wood with an axe and Douglas collected wet turpentine shrub and with a candle tea-light we soon had a roaring fire. Not surprisingly, no-one else arrived!

In the morning we still had no view but it had stopped raining so we got an early start and were back at the car by 9.30am! With stops at Jacksons and Arthurs Pass to re-fuel, we were back in Chch by early afternoon. Thanks to all for an interesting and energetic if not particularly scenic trip and particular thanks to Douglas for his expert navigation skills! We were: **Tim Hines, Douglas Woods, Trevor Blogg and Mary Hines.** 🏠

## Googling Through Northern Headwaters Feb 2012

### A 'new' trip in the upper Clarence/Wairau

This 'ground-breaking' trip arose from my perception that opportunities in the headwaters of the Clarence, Waiau and Wairau, and those lying further north, were limited firstly by the few passes linking them, and secondly by the long car ferries on lonely roads to link up start and finish points. Hours of lounge-traversing this terrain on Google Earth convinced me of a new 2 or 3-day possibility, from Lake Tennyson, up the Clarence, over into the Rainbow tributaries and, then over into the upper Wairau via my secret 'Google Gap', and then by another pass back to the car at Tennyson. We picked Waitangi Weekend.

Eight km beyond Tennyson we camped beside the big rock at the base of Paske Saddle. Someone had kindly placed a picture of this on Google Earth. Next morning we climbed the upstream side spur into the upper basin leading to the saddle. At the saddle, rather than drop into the Paske and the hut, we sidled higher to our true right into the next side creek. Around the spur we could see the lower section of what I thought (hoped) was our key to crossing the mostly bluffy Turk Ridge. The loose upper scree led us nicely to 'Google Gap' (1800m), now overlooking the headwaters of Marlborough's Wairau. The drop into this stream is one of the finest long scree descents anywhere. We camped in the lee of a picturesque dump of glacial moraine at the junction of the two upper Wairau feeders. It was a 10 minute walk to a many-fingered waterfall that drops from the highest feeder, and marked on the map as 35m high. In drizzly fog next morning we gained easy height up to the next saddle, overlooking the Clarence again at the head of Tennyson.

Never mind that just as I was about to write this up, I discovered that Sven Brabyn's *Tramping - Mt Richmond to Arthur's Pass* had described a similar circuit, though he suggested descending the Paske right down to the hut, then climbing to the crest of Turk Ridge behind it, dropping into a Wairau tributary, and over the final pass back to Tennyson.

Seriously, this is a superb and convenient 'upper catchments' trip. A morning drive from Christchurch leads to a 4-hour walk up the Clarence to camp below Paske Saddle and a longer second day leads over the saddle and then to a higher crossing of Turk Ridge and into the upper Wairau. Day 3 is a half-day pass-crossing and lakeside walk to the car, all set for a mid-afternoon drive back home with time for a hot or cold swim at Hanmer. A nimble party might squeeze it into two days.

Although we saw two other small parties on Paske Saddle, there was hardly any tracking the whole way—vegetation re-growth was rank after removal of grazing—and there were no signs or even markers beyond Tennyson, and only a distant glimpse of a hut further down-valley. It's a lightly used area. Further pluses for the Clarence and these valleys to the east is that they lie east of the main thrust of the nor'wester, and on this circuit there are unlikely to be major river crossing concerns.

**Grant, Anne and Richie Hunter** 🏠 GH





‘Google Gap’ the low-point of Turk Ridge, from upper Wairau side



‘35m’ waterfall, upper Wairau